

Office of the Town Clerk

Fiscal Year 2002

Town Clerk

The Town Clerk's office continues to see increased service levels associated with passport applications, notarizations, certified copies and various licenses and permits. Since the Department became a passport acceptance facility in 1999, the number of applications accepted has grown from 865 in fiscal year 2000, to 1,324 in fiscal year 2002. Amidst the ever-increasing demand for services, the Town Clerk staff has managed to meet all of its legal obligations.

A staff addition highlighted departmental activity during the fiscal year. In September 2001, Anna Maciaszek became Amherst's Assistant Town Clerk. Within her first few months in the Department, she was trained as a passport acceptance agent and burial permit agent, and was commissioned a Massachusetts Justice of the Peace.

Two special Town Meetings, as well as an eleven-session Annual Town Meeting were held in fiscal year 2002. Sixteen of the forty-five articles on the Annual Town Meeting warrant were placed by citizen petition.

Two of nine Town Meeting vacancies which existed in October 2001 were filled in accordance with Section 7 of the Representative Town Meeting Act. The Amherst Town Government Act, which now constitutes the charter of the Town of Amherst, was adopted in December of 2001 and completely replaced the Representative Town Meeting Act and Town Manager Act.

Voter Registration

Voter registration activity was relatively light, as only an Annual Town Election was held during fiscal year 2002. The number of registered voters at the 2002 town election was 17,493. State initiative petitions and nomination papers were circulated by various campaigns in the fall and spring of the fiscal year. Thousands of these papers were received in the Town Clerk's office and each paper was certified individually. The large number of papers received corresponded with bursts of voter activity and consumed a great deal of staff time.

Elections

Newly revised voting precincts, based on federal census data, became effective with the 2002 Annual Town Election. The revision eliminated the two "sub-precincts", formerly located at the University of Massachusetts, but created a virtually all-student precinct at UMass. Voters were informed of their correct precincts on an insert included with the annual street listing forms. The Annual Town Election, which was the Town's second election conducted with optical scan voting equipment, was very quiet, with only a 7.7% voter turnout. Four training sessions were offered to election workers prior to the election, to update them on current election laws and procedures. Town-wide office candidates and twenty-four town meeting candidates or vacancies were listed on each precinct's Town election ballot.

In September of 2001, the Town submitted challenges to the Federal Census Bureau, requesting that corrections be made to allocations of housing units in census blocks and to federal census population counts. Town Meeting Members elected at the March 26, 2002 Annual Town Election represented the precincts that had been established based on the 2000 federal census data. In April 2002, the Town received notice from the Federal Census Bureau that corrections to housing unit allocations were made. Although the Reprecincting Task Force could re-draw precinct lines based on the approved corrections, the Town is expected to submit supplemental challenges to the Federal Census Bureau in fiscal year 2003. Reprecincting Task Force members, appointed by the Select Board, are Herbert Bryan, Marilyn Gonter, Jon Hite, Doris Holden, Mary Jane Laus, Kenneth Mosakowski, Caroline Olson, Margaret Roberts and Carl Seppala.

Board of Registrars Fiscal Year 2002

Members:

Robert W. McAllister, Sr. – Republican, Chair
Gladys Rodriguez – Democrat
Doris R. Holden – Republican
Margaret Z. Nartowicz, Clerk

The Board of Registrars held a voter registration session on March 6, 2002, the deadline to register for the Annual Town Election. There was a light turnout for the session, which was conducted from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Town Clerk's office.

Several initiative petitions, as well as Town and state nomination papers were circulated during the fiscal year. Town Clerk staff members are authorized by the Board of Registrars to certify signatures of registered voters on nomination papers and petition forms.

The 2002 annual register of voters and the Amherst Street List were produced, using information provided on the annual street listing forms and follow-up confirmation cards.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Z. Nartowicz, Town Clerk
Clerk of the Board of Registrars

VITAL STATISTICS – FY 2002

BIRTHS 157

MARRIAGES 116

DEATHS 115

VOTING INFORMATION – FY 2002

(at March 26, 2002 Annual Town Election)

<u>PRECINCTS</u>	<u>REGISTERED VOTERS</u>	<u>POLL LOCATION</u>
1	1,616	No. Congregational Church Hall
2	2,053	North Fire Station
3	1,156	Immanuel Lutheran Church Lounge
4	1,854	Bangs Community Center
5	1,482	Bangs Community Center
6	1,987	Fort River School
7	1,752	Crocker Farm School
8	2,461	Munson Memorial Library
9	1,852	Wildwood School
10	<u>1,280</u>	Hampden Dining Hall, UMass
	17,493	